

SPEECH OF HON. LEWIS D. CAMPBELL, OF OHIO.

ON SOUTHERN AGGRESSION, THE PURPOSES OF THE UNION, AND THE COMPARATIVE EFFECTS OF SLAVERY AND FREEDOM.

Delivered in the House of Representatives, February 19, 1850.

Mr. CAMPBELL, having obtained the floor at the close of the remarks of Mr. VENABLE, of North Carolina, addressed the Committee as follows:

Mr. CHAIRMAN:

Before submitting my views upon this all-absorbing topic of Slavery, I desire to defend the action of the country which I in part have the honor to represent from unfounded charges, which are constantly preferred against it. We had scarcely taken the preliminary steps for an organization of this House, before the South in tones of thundering eloquence denounced the people of the North as "aggressors," as "recreants to the Constitution," as having for years been guilty of "oppression" to their brethren of the South. In this Hall—in the social circle—upon the highway—everywhere we met with this charge. Sir, I propose briefly to examine the state of this account of aggression."

How does it stand, as to territorial acquisitions, since the formation of the Union. We of the North have been opposed to an extension of our domain. We have been taught by the warning voice of past Republics, that

"Extended empire, like expanded gold.
Exchanges solid strength for feeble splendor."

Our policy has been different, and we have yielded.

In 1803, we annexed Louisiana.
In 1819, we annexed the Territory of Florida.
In 1845, we annexed the State of Texas.
In 1848, we annexed by conquest California and New Mexico.

In 1849, we have a stronger movement for annexing Cuba than we had ten years ago in favor of annexing Texas.

And now the honorable gentleman from North Carolina [Mr. CLINGMAN] notifies us that after the next Presidential election we will annex that part of Mexico on the Gulf, extending to Vera Cruz.

The South does all this, and still persists in the cry of "aggression! aggression!" Sir, the North has yielded to this system too long, and now she has determined to stop it.

Mr. Chairman, the Constitution guarantees to every citizen the right of petition. Some of our Northern people believe that in Territories over which Congress had power to legislate, slavery should be either immediately or prospectively abolished. They sent here their petitions. South-

ern power treated them with contempt, and trampled them under foot! Was there no "aggression" in refusing our people the exercise of that sacred right?

A colleague of mine, now upon this floor, [Mr. GIDDINGS,] was sent here to represent as intelligent and as patriotic a people as is to be found in the whole land. He presented, in the discharge of his official duty, a series of resolutions against slavery and the slave trade. They were obnoxious to the South, and with the aid of Northern doughfaces, who are fast finding their level, you expelled him from this Hall, and attempted to disgrace him. Yet, during this session, we find that before we perfect an organization, a proposition is boldly made to dissolve the Union, by members from Southern States, in the event that the people's representatives pass a particular law; yet nothing like censure is proposed by those lately so sensitive.

Who has been "oppressed" in dividing the honors and emoluments of office? The poor, down-trodden South? She has almost monopolized the important offices since the formation of the Government. Let those who wish to have official evidence of her wrongs in this regard, examine the Blue Book. Virginia suffers! There are still a few of the "first families" unprovided for, and it is an act of unparalleled aggression! Why, sir, so craving is her thirst for these honors, that I see in one town (all the whites having been provided for, I suppose) they procure the appointment of a negro as Postmaster!

How much did we aggress in organizing this House? And who gave the strongest evidence of a desire to organize by geographical tests? We always found, on this side of the House, Southern Whigs enough to hold the balance of power, who preferred the election of a Southern Democrat to a Northern Whig. On the other side, Southern Democrats enough to elect a Southern Whig in preference to a Northern Democrat. And if, in the course of our efforts to organize, any candidate of either party was suspected of having ever seen the city of Buffalo, his fate was sealed.

But, Mr. Chairman, I am consuming too much of the brief hour allotted to me in detailing this account of aggression.

What has the North done to produce this loud and continual clatter about "aggression?" Bear in mind, an act of aggression must be an act of wrong. So long as we act for the promotion of that which is morally right, we cannot aggress.

Much complaint is made about negroes running off to the free States. I suppose they do sometimes stray away. But if you will keep property that will run off, is it our fault? We do not turn out to catch runaway negroes. There is a reason for that. The farmer, in that beautiful valley which I have the honor to represent in part, has no slave to till his soil. His family depend upon the labor of their own hands for support. He cannot, he will not, abandon his plough and his fields, mount his horse, when he hears that a negro has been seen in the neighborhood, and follow in pursuit, on suspicion that he may be the slave of some member of Congress from Virginia. He has examined the Constitution, and finds nothing there which makes this his duty. The village mechanic in Ohio, who drives the jack-plane, and earns his bread by the sweat of his brow, will not abandon his honest pursuits, when he sees a man pass in the street, with a skin somewhat darker than his own, and a budget on his back, follow him, knock him down, and tie him, because there is a possibility that a Mississippi planter may hold a mortgage on his bones, flesh, and sinews! Our fair countrywomen, yielding to the tender sympathies which always adorn their sex, when inquired of by a disconsolate passer by of their own sex, who perhaps may carry in her arms an infant slightly tinged, may point out the nearest and best road to Canada. Is there anything wrong in this? Point it out.

On this point let me remark, that whilst the great mass of all parties in my State disclaim all design to interfere with your "peculiar institution" in States where it constitutionally exists, they remember, and will never forget, that they, too, have an institution the operations of which are somewhat "peculiar," which they call *Freedom*! They have tasted its blessings, and they will throw no obstacles in the way of all who may strive to obtain them. If our Southern brethren, then, will have slaves, and these slaves will run off to Ohio, they must capture them themselves.

But we aggress on the South because our political power increases more rapidly than hers. That is the result of an increase in population. We cannot help it if there are peculiarities about our institution which produce this result. It is certainly not wrong if we obey that injunction of Holy Writ, "Multiply and replenish the earth." This complaint comes with a poor grace, especially from the gentleman from North Carolina. [Mr. CLINGMAN,] who has, as yet, withheld from his country his aid in removing this source of inequality.

But we are charged with designing or threatening to aggress by the passage of the Proviso. I intend to vote for the admission of California as a State with this clause in her Constitution, and for a Territorial law for New Mexico embracing it. We are told that it excludes the South from a fair share of the territory acquired by common blood and common treasure; and that it weakens the title to their property, and prevents them from removing it thither. This is not true. That Proviso is and has been in full force in the State of Ohio and the Northwestern Territory for sixty years. A large portion of her best citizens are from the South. The district which immediately represent embraces a large body of the lands of

the Virginia military district, to which Virginians and North Carolinians emigrated with their property. Some took slaves with them, to whom their families were attached, although they knew that the moment the foot of the slave touched that soil, with the master's consent, one of the peculiarities of our institution made him a free man. And here let me say that the most thoroughgoing Free-Soil men, and the most violent Abolitionists there, are those furnished us by North Carolina and Virginia. I would be entirely safe in allowing my action here to be governed on this subject by the views of those in my district who came from slave States. Their warmth in favor of Free Soil may, I suppose, be attributed to that same principle of human action which makes the reformed drunkard the most ardent in pressing onward the cause of temperance; or the converted sinner the cause of Christianity. These men had been eye-witnesses to the evil effects of slavery, not the least of which is its tendency to reduce to the level of the degraded slave the free labor of the poor white man where it exists. If the Proviso is applied to these Mexican Territories, the Southern man as well as the Northern man may take his property there; he may take his negroes if he chooses; but if he takes them, they cease to be property or things, and are made persons only.

The honorable member from Mississippi [Mr. BROWN] takes a bold position, if he is sincere, and I will not question it, notwithstanding his preposterous assertion. I read from his printed speech. [Mr. C. here read from Mr. BROWN's speech:]

"For myself, I REGARD SLAVERY AS A GREAT MORAL, SOCIAL, POLITICAL, AND RELIGIOUS BLESSING—A BLESSING TO THE SLAVE AND A BLESSING TO THE MASTER."

The honorable gentleman proceeds with arguments to prove that great blessings are conferred upon the African by making him a slave! Now, sir, if the gentleman can make this position good by sound argument, and if the honorable member from North Carolina [Mr. CLINGMAN] can make good his declaration that where slavery exists you find the greatest degree of civilization, refinement, wealth, comfort, and happiness, I pledge myself to abandon the Proviso, and oppose it here and elsewhere, with as much honest ardor as I now support it. If slavery is a blessing to the slave, how is it that the great, the good, and the wise, of every civilized land upon earth, have never learned the fact? This is a great age we live in, and it has been reserved for the keen perceptive faculties of the honorable member from Mississippi to make the grand discovery that the true way to make a negro happy is to put him in chains, and under the lash of the taskmaster! A discovery somewhat parallel to this in importance, was made by one of the gentleman's political associates, but a few years ago, to wit: that the way to civilize the Mexican race was to knock out their brains!

If the position of the honorable gentleman is correct, will he tell us why our laws do not regard that man who steals the African infant from its mother's breast, and bears it to perpetual bondage—who forces from his native land the father, to rivet upon him the chains and fetters of slavery—as a philanthropist, and not as a felon? Why does he not introduce a bill, entitled "a bill

to make Africa happy," providing for the repeal of all laws prohibiting the slave-trade, and giving to the philanthropists who will engage in it, 160 acres of land for each native African brought into slavery?

I must examine the morals involved in this question of slavery. Having learned something of the high tone of moral character accorded, justly, no doubt, to my honorable friend from Alabama, [Mr. HILLIARD,] I listened attentively to his eloquent speech, expecting him to base his argument upon a different foundation. I will not say he "dodged," but I do think he evaded the question, for he was particular to state with emphasis, that he could not discuss the question in its moral bearings, because, he said, we had nothing to do here with public morals! From what little I have seen here, I am induced to believe that the conduct of many is made to conform to this "platform." Sir, I profess no extra degree of morals myself, but I may be permitted to say, considering its source, this avowal shocked me!

Mr. HILLIARD. Will the gentleman from Ohio allow me to explain and correct him?

Mr. CAMPBELL. With great pleasure.

Mr. HILLIARD. I said that I would refrain from discussing the question as a moral one, because we hold no power to legislate on the morality of the question. To enter into a discussion here on that point might be deemed an admission of the jurisdiction of Congress over the subject.

Mr. CAMPBELL. I have not misunderstood the honorable gentleman, although I have not yet had the pleasure of reading his printed speech. To come directly to the point, the gentleman can now tell us whether he regards slavery as a moral evil or as a blessing.

Mr. HILLIARD. I do not regard it as a moral evil in the States where it exists.

Mr. CAMPBELL. Well, then, Mr. Chairman, it will be my duty as well as my pleasure to prove that it is a moral curse. I shall do so by referring directly to the opinions of some men which, notwithstanding my high regard for the gentleman from Alabama, are entitled to far more weight than his.

Mr. HILLIARD. I will ask the gentleman from Ohio a question. Admitting it to be morally wrong, what right have we to legislate upon the moral question?

Mr. CAMPBELL. Sir, I will answer the gentleman's question by putting one to every member of the Committee. Admitting it to be morally wrong, how do you make it politically right? You cannot by any principle of philosophy that I have ever heard of, make that which is absolutely morally wrong politically right by legislation. Why? What power, asks the gentleman, in a tone of apparent triumph, have we, as the representatives of the people, to legislate with a view to promote public morals? Is it possible that such a question is seriously propounded, and must be seriously answered? What power? What right? A power which is the foundation of all civilized government. The first great object of all law, of all legislation, is to enforce that which is morally right, and prevent that which is morally wrong. It is to accomplish this grand purpose that Governments are instituted among men.

But, Mr. Chairman, let us proceed with an examination of facts bearing upon the moral, social, and political effects of Slavery, and show how far Southern gentlemen, in the frenzy of their excitement, have suffered themselves to depart from the principles and feelings of their revolutionary ancestors. And, sir, in this connection, I lay down what may be regarded by some as a bold proposition. I assert, that one of the very designs of the founders of this Republic, when they rebelled against the power of Great Britain, and formed a union of the Provinces, was to prevent the extension of Slavery; to do that which you denounce us as mad fanatics for proposing, and for which, when accomplished in part only, according to their designs, you say you intend to destroy the great work of their hands—this glorious Confederacy of States—this happy Union—which secures liberty to millions, and has commanded the admiration of the world.

The gentleman from North Carolina [Mr. CLINGMAN] boasts that the ball of the Revolution was started at Mecklenburg, where a resolution was passed in 1774. I have looked into the history of those days. There were many patriotic meetings in the South then. The gentleman will permit me to show the reasons which led to the rebellion.

Let us carry our imagination back to Virginia, the Old Dominion, as she was in 1774. I hold in my hand the 1st vol. 4th Series of American Archives, published by order of Congress. It contains an account of various public meetings held preparatory to the then approaching conflict of those weak Colonies with the giant nation of the earth. The patriots of Virginia proposed a State Convention at Williamsburg. County meetings of the people were held to appoint delegates, and declare their principles and determinations.

Mr. C. here read as follows, from page 523:

"At a meeting of the freeholders and other inhabitants of the county of Culpepper, in Virginia, assembled at the Court-House of the said county, on Thursday, the 7th of July, 1774, to consider the most effective method to preserve the rights and liberties of America.

HENRY PENDLETON, Esq., Moderator.

* * * * *
"Resolved, That the importing slaves and convict servants is injurious to this colony, as it obstructs the population of it with freemen and useful manufacturers; and that we will not buy any such slave or convict servant hereafter to be imported."

This meeting appointed "deputies" to the convention.

A VOICE. "That is only a resolution against the slave trade."

Mr. CAMPBELL. True; such is the fact. But why did they resolve on this? To prevent the spread of slavery. Why? Because it was a political evil. There are two ways in which you may extend slavery. One, by extending it over new countries, opening new markets—increasing the demand and consequently the value—thus inducing an increased production. The other, by importations. The spirit of the resolution shows that a prohibition of its extension was the design. But if gentlemen will be patient, I will not only show that they opposed its extension, but, even in the South, sought the Union for the purpose of abolishing it where it existed.

Similar resolutions were passed by primary meetings of the people throughout Virginia and other Southern provinces, now States.

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| By Prinos George's county | July, 1774, page 493 |
| By Nansemond county | " " 530 |
| By Caroline county | " " 541 |
| By Surry county | " " 553 |
| By Fairfax co., (WASHINGTON in the chair) | " " 600 |
| By Harrison county | " " 616 |
| By Princess Anne county | " " 641 |

And by various other counties which I need not name.

The State Convention assembled at Williamsburg on the 1st of August, 1774. They adopted this resolution :

2d. *Resolved* "We will neither ourselves import nor purchase any slave or slaves imported by any other person after the first day of November next, either from Africa, the West Indies, or any other place."—Page 687.

This Convention recommended a Congress to meet at Philadelphia on the first Monday of September, 1774. THOMAS JEFFERSON, the great apostle of liberty, could not attend the Convention, but he sent it a letter expressing his opinions and wishes. I read an extract from page 696 :

"For the most trifling reasons, and sometimes for no conceivable reason at all, his Majesty has rejected laws of the most salutary tendency. THE ABOLITION OF DOMESTIC SLAVERY IS THE GREATEST OBJECT OF DESIRE IN THESE COLONIES, where it was unhappily introduced in their infant state. But previous to the enfranchisement of the slaves we have, it is necessary to exclude all further importations from Africa. Yet our repeated attempts to effect this by prohibitions, and by imposing duties which might amount to prohibition, have been hitherto defeated by his Majesty's negative—thus preferring the immediate advantages of a few African Corsairs to the LASTING INTEREST of the American States, and to the RIGHTS OF HUMAN NATURE DEEPLY WOUNDED BY THIS INFAMOUS MASTER!"

How do gentlemen relish Mr. Jefferson's views upon the moral and political questions now raised on this floor?

North Carolina held her Provincial Convention, not at Mecklenburg, but at Newbern. The honorable gentleman from that State on the other side of the House, [Mr. ASHE,] the other day expressed to my colleague [Mr. ROOT] a desire to know who from North Carolina had been opposed to extending slavery. I have "the documents" here for his information. Nearly every county in this State was represented in this Convention. There were sixty-nine "deputies." It was convened on the 27th of August, 1774, and passed this resolution. On page 735 the gentleman will find the names of the deputies and the resolution :

"Resolved, That we will not import any slave or slaves, or purchase any slave or slaves imported or brought into the Province by others, from any part of the world, after the first day of November next."

Mr. Chairman, I will not go farther into details of the action of the Provinces separately. The deputies they appointed and instructed assembled at Philadelphia on the 5th of September, 1774. Let us look upon that assemblage of our patriot fathers. It was in the dark hour of our political history. It was "the day that tried men's souls." Yet they resolved to redress the grievances inflicted upon them by Great Britain, or perish nobly in the attempt. *We are men of words—they were men of action.* What was their design? To form a Union. The Provinces must be united. I have here the bond of their Union—the first Union! It is called the "Articles of Association." It was the bond of our fathers with the Almighty, whose all-protecting arm they desired as the shield to save them in the unequal contest they were about to engage in; they pledge by their "virtue and their honor."

Sir, I listened the other day to the honorable gentleman from Georgia [Mr. STEPHENS] with the most profound satisfaction. The power of his eloquent appeal in favor of the purchase of Washington's Farewell Address, marred as it was by a repetition of the unjust charge of "Northern aggression," could not, did not fail to awaken the tender sympathies and feelings of every heart not wholly lost to the impulses of patriotism. He spoke of the incalculable value of the autographs of our revolutionary forefathers. Sir, I call that honorable gentleman's attention to these autographs of the members of the First Continental Congress. [Here Mr. C. held up the Articles of Association, unanimously adopted by the Continental Congress, containing a fac-simile of the signatures appended to it.] Look at the bold hand of Washington, of Patrick Henry, and of Lee; of Hooper and Caswell; of Jay and Duane; of the Adames; of Gadsden and the Rutledges; and of Stephen Hopkins. If the gentleman, prompted by those nobler feelings of his nature, would regard as priceless an old manuscript letter of a father to his son, containing advice upon his leaving the paternal roof to embark upon the stormy sea of this world, what should be his veneration for this document? How much should he, how much will he sacrifice to preserve inviolate this written pledge of our fathers to the God of battles that they would check this acknowledged curse of slavery? Sir, the gentleman invoked in most pathetic and heart-reaching language the spirit of Washington to check his Northern brethren in what he termed their disposition of aggression. Could it be availing, I, too, would invoke the return of the illustrious dead from the tombs of Mount Vernon, of Monticello, and of Quincy, to stay the mad career of those who propose to destroy those glorious institutions which are the results of their toil—the fruits of their struggles for liberty! If I could but command the eloquence of the gentleman from Georgia, I could appeal, perhaps successfully, to him, to his colleague, to his associates of the sunny South, to come back to these principles and purposes—to these holy designs of our common ancestors—to join with us, in the spirit of brotherly love and brotherly kindness, in an effort to redeem this solemn pledge, entered into in the dreary hour of their misfortune, by the founders of that Government which has secured to us all the blessings we can hope for in our earthly career.

Mr. Chairman, I will read the extracts from these Articles of Association, which are applicable to the point :

"We do, for ourselves and the inhabitants of the several Colonies whom we represent, firmly agree and associate under the sacred ties of virtue, honor, and love of our country, as follows :

2. "That we will neither import nor purchase any slave imported after the first day of December next; after which time we will wholly discontinue the slave trade, and will neither be concerned in it ourselves, nor will we hire our vessels, nor sell our commodities or manufactures, to those who are concerned in it."

11. "That a committee be chosen in every county, city, and town, by those who are qualified to vote for Representatives in the Legislature, whose business it shall be attentively to observe the conduct of all persons touching this Association; and when it shall be made to appear, to the satisfaction of a majority of any such committee, that any person within the limits of their appointment has violated this Association, that

such majority do forthwith cause the truth of the case to be published in the gazette, to the end that all such foes to the rights of British America may be publicly known, and universally contemned as the enemies of American liberty; and (therefore) we respectively will break off all dealings with him or her."

11. "And we do further agree and resolve that we will have no trade, commerce, dealings, or intercourse whatever, with any colony or province in North America, which shall not woe to, or which shall hereafter violate this Association, but will hold them as unworthy of the rights of freemen, and as inimical to the liberties of this country."

"The foregoing Association, being determined upon by the Congress, was ordered to be subscribed by the several members thereof; and thereupon, we have hereunto set our respective names accordingly.

In Congress, Philadelphia, October 20, 1747.

PEYTON RANDOLPH,

President.

New Hampshire—John Sullivan, Nathaniel Folsom.

Massachusetts Bay—Thomas Cushing, Samuel Adams, John Adams, Robert Treat Paine.

Rhode Island—Stephen Hopkins, Samuel Ward.

Connecticut—Eliphalet Dyer, Roger Sherman, Silas Deane.

New York—Isaac Low, John Alsop, John Jay, James Duane, Philip Livingston, William Floyd, Henry Wisner, Simon Boerum.

New Jersey—James Kinsey, William Livingston, Stephen Crane, Richard Smith, John De Hart.

Pennsylvania—Joseph Galloway, John Dickinson, Charles Humphreys, Thomas Mifflin, Edward Biddle, John Morton, George Ross.

The lower counties, Newcastle, &c.—Cæsar Rodney, Thomas McKean, George Read.

Maryland—Matthew Tilghman, Thomas Johnson, Jr., William Paca, Samuel Chase.

Virginia—Richard Henry Lee, George Washington, Patrick Henry, Jr., Richard Bland, Benjamin Harrison, Edmund Pendleton.

North Carolina—William Hooper, Joseph Hewes, Richard Caswell.

South Carolina—Henry Middleton, Thomas Lynch, Christopher Gadsden, John Rutledge, Edward Rutledge.

Mr. BOWDON. I would inquire of the gentleman from Ohio whether he calls that the Constitution of the Union?

Mr. CAMPBELL. I will with pleasure inform the honorable gentleman from Alabama. It is not the last Constitution of the Union, but higher evidence to prove the point I make, which is, that the *Provinces formed their first Union*, among other things, to check the progress of slavery! The gentleman from Alabama, on the other side of the Hall, [Mr. INGE,] the other day spoke of the Continental Congress, and of the Declaration of Independence, as a production from that august body of patriots, called for by the pressure of public opinion from without. So with this document, which is a declaration two years older than the Declaration of Independence itself. The outside pressure of public opinion on the subject of slavery, expressed at the various primary meetings of the people themselves, some of which I have referred to, required, as a preliminary step to the contemplated resistance, a solemn pledge that slavery should go no further; and it must be borne in mind that these fathers carried with them the same spirit and the same design when they subsequently entered into more formal articles, passed the Ordinance of 1787, and formed our present Constitution.

Georgia was not represented in the Continental Congress, as you will observe. The reasons which prevented a representation I need not detail. Still the patriots of that province in that good old time, unlike her misguided but no doubt sincere Representatives on this floor, were determined not to be behind the other colonies in their efforts to secure

to themselves, and to extend to those in slavery the blessings of freedom.

Georgia proclaimed her sentiments on the 12th of January, 1775, after the adjournment of the Continental Congress, (page 1136.)

"We, therefore, the Representatives of the extensive District of *Earriet*, in the colony of Georgia, having now assembled in Congress, by authority and free choice of the inhabitants of said District, now freed from their fetters, do resolve:

"5. To show the world that we are not influenced by any contracted or interested motives, but a general philanthropy for ALL MANKIND, of whatever climate, language, or complexion, we hereby declare our disapprobation and abhorrence of the unnatural practice of slavery in America, (however the uncultivated state of our country, or other specious arguments may plead for it,) a practice founded in injustice and cruelty, and highly dangerous to our liberties, (as well as lives,) debasing part of our fellow-creatures below men, and corrupting the virtue and morals of the rest, and is laying the basis of that liberty we contend for, (and which we pray the Almighty to continue to the latest posterity,) upon a very wrong foundation. We, therefore, *Resolve, at all times to use our utmost endeavors for the manumission of our slaves in this colony, upon the most safe and equitable footing for the master and themselves.*"

Such was the action—these were the sentiments upon this question of moral and political right, when the foundation of our great superstructure was laid, and which was subsequently cemented with the blood of our heroic ancestors.

Sir, I have offered the testimony exclusively Southern, not of Northern provinces. I would that we could but summon here those veterans to give us with a living voice their opinions just as they are here recorded. Would Washington be scouted from this Hall as a recreant to the best interests of his country? Would the Virginian denounce Jefferson as a traitor, because he said slavery was an execrable practice; or Patrick Henry as a "fanatic," because he avowed his devotion to the cause of human freedom, in that ever memorable burst of eloquence in the Virginia Convention, closing with "Give me liberty, or give me death!"

Suppose this Hall was now occupied by the old Continental Congress—this question raised, and they unanimously declare slavery a moral and political evil—would the honorable gentlemen from Alabama, Mississippi, North Carolina, and Georgia, denounce them as recreants to their country? Oh! no. Why, then, do they disavow the principles they proclaimed? Does not the experience of the last half century prove that they truly foresaw the blighting effects of this evil of which they desired to rid themselves? The rapid increase of the States, where slavery does not exist, in power and strength, and everything calculated to render life agreeable, establishes the wisdom of their determination.

Some of the States who were parties to this obligation have redeemed their pledges. We now propose to carry out, as far as we can, their original purpose.

Mr. STANLY. To abolish slavery in the States?

Mr. CAMPBELL. We will not do that where under the Constitution it exists. We leave that matter for you to attend to as you like; but we, having power over the Territories, intend to follow these wholesome counsels from the founders of the Government, and exclude slavery from them forever by the power of public sentiment—by the power of the law—and, if necessary, in maintaining the majesty of the law, by the power of the sword!

Mr. BOWDON. Will the gentleman from Ohio show us the power in the Constitution to pass such a law?

Mr. CAMPBELL. I have much to say yet in the little time that is left me. I have spoken by time before, and if I regarded the constitutional question as doubtful, I would not now go into it. If the honorable gentleman desires a discussion of that question with me, I will meet him on any stump, either in Alabama or Ohio, after Congress adjourns. It will save some money to discuss it in that way. For the present, I content myself by saying that the question of power has been decided in our favor by Congress, and by the various Administrations from the organization of the Government to the present time, and it will soon be settled again, notwithstanding the threats of a dissolution of the Union! If the gentleman intends to debate that question here, I desire to be informed in what article of the Constitution is the power found which enables you to stretch a wire on the line of 36° 30', your proposed compromise, and legislate to *establish slavery on one side of it and prohibit it on the other*? And on what principle of *political justice* to the North do you claim that an Alabamian may go with one hundred slaves, settle on one side of this wire, and come into this hall with a power of *sixty-one votes*, whilst the Ohioan, who takes property equal in value to a State on the other side, comes here with the power of *one vote only*? The arguments offered on these points remind me of those once offered by the opposition in relation to the improvements of our Western rivers and harbors, claiming that the constitutionality as well as the justice of the measure depended upon the character of the water—whether *fresh or salt*! [A laugh.]

Mr. BOWDON. Did not that argument come from Ohio?

Mr. CAMPBELL. I believe the sentiment came from Mr. Polk, and my colleague [Mr. SCHENCK] dressed it up in plain English, that our hardy boatmen who navigate the Western rivers, and the sailors on our lakes, might readily perceive its tremendous force!

I now proceed briefly, Mr. Chairman, to examine the other proposition of the gentleman from North Carolina [Mr. CLINGMAN] as to the relative degree of civilization and human happiness in the slave and free States.

Upon the question as to what is *true happiness and comfort*, there may be some difference of opinion. It is a very comfortable thing, no doubt, to have a negro to rub you down when you get up in the morning, after having been off on a "bast" the night before!—to pour out your sherry at dinner—to bring you a light when you wish to take your evening smoke—or to keep off the flies as you take your afternoon's snooze! This is mere *animal comfort*. In the Northwest, we believe that the cultivation of the intellect—the advancement of public morals—are the true sources of public happiness. Hence, we build churches and school-houses—found colleges and academies, establish literary associations and Sunday schools! I take up the gauntlet thrown down so vauntingly by the honorable gentleman, and it is by this standard that I bring up Ohio, my native State, the "first-born" under the Ordinance of '87, and proudly place her by the side of the Southern

States, to meet her examination, and an unbiased verdict.

I take my statistics from the census tables returned in 1840. Ohio has about *one half only* of the white population of Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Alabama, Louisiana, Arkansas, and Mississippi, *eight* of the "prosperous and happy" slave States; yet she sends to school *forty-two thousand* more children than the whole of them together.

Ohio has about the same white population as North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Alabama, and Mississippi, united; and she has *eighteen hundred and fifteen* more colleges, academies, and schools, than the whole five together, and sends to school *one hundred and thirty-one thousand* more children!

In order to bring this test nearer to our immediate homes, I propose bringing the district I have the honor to answer for here, into comparison with the honorable member's "happy" constituents. I do not boast of the intelligence of my constituents—they are about on an equality with the balance of the State. There is one county in the gentleman's district whose people, I suppose, he had in his mind's eye, when he was depicting the prosperous and happy condition of the South! It ought to be the most intelligent county south of Mason and Dixon, if we may judge from the vast number of speeches which have been made for its special improvement. It is the county of *Buncombe*! [Laughter.] The statistics show that my district, composed of three counties, has *two hundred and forty-three colleges and schools*, and sends to them upwards of *fifteen thousand scholars*. Buncombe has one college, and the startling number of *one whole school*! [laughter] precisely the same number that you find sustained in several of our villages by the free negroes! I do not know that it should be counted as a *whole* school either, because, by reference to the other column, I see it contains *only ten scholars*!

Buncombe gives one school to every 4,000 of her white population—my district, one to every 275.

My district sends one out of five of her white population to school. Buncombe sends one of 350!

A VOICE. You take no account of our private schools, not returned by the census.

Mr. CAMPBELL. Nor do I take any account of our private schools. Every log cabin in my district is a private school-house! You can find those there who seldom get to public schools. In the long winter evenings you will find collected by the fire-side, the evidences of that increase of population complained of, a circle of flaxen-haired, hearty boys and girls. The oldest has perhaps advanced at school to the "rule of three," and has a class of younger ones in simple addition at home—calculating, not the value of the Union, but probably the number of bushels of corn taken to market during the day. In this way many of our people are educated, and not a few of those thus brought up, find their way, in the course of time, to seats in this House. I have a constituent, now in my mind, who was born in Kentucky, and came to my district, which is now his home, who received his education in one of these private schools of ours! At the age of sixteen he drove baggage-wagons with supplies for the army which defended our frontier. On his return he was crippled in

his wagoning operations. Being confined for a year, he betook himself to study, and at the end of that time had, without the aid of teacher, become master of the Latin and Greek languages! The "crack of his whip" has been heard in both branches of Congress, and if the Union is not dissolved *too soon*, we would like to see how he could manage the great team of State!

But I have heard of these private schools of the South before. I will apply another test, which may be more satisfactory and more just!

In the five slave States above named, there are of whites, over twenty years of age, who *cannot read or write*, 138,000. In Ohio, (with the same white population,) there are of those who cannot read or write, 35,000. Showing in the same slave States with the same white population of Ohio, *one hundred and three thousand* more white adults who cannot read or write than we do. Your *private schools*, therefore, are not quite so *efficient* as ours. I will not say that your scholars are not as apt as ours, as that might be regarded as "aggressive."²⁷

How is it in Buncombe? Her white population over twenty years old is 3,345. Of these, there are who *cannot read or write* 1,359. Or for every *three* adults who can read or write, she has two who cannot.

Taking her whole white population, there is one to six who cannot read or write. In my district we have one to thirty-two. In the five slave States above named, of this class there is *one to fourteen*. In Ohio, *only one to forty-two*!

In giving these statistics their proper force, two things must be borne in mind. 1st. That the *slave population* of the South, few of whom are educated, is not included. 2d. That they have slaves to perform their labor, whilst they may go to school, and in Ohio we labor for ourselves.

I refer the gentlemen who have pressed this investigation upon me, to a table which is the result of some labor. It will be a convenient thing for them. They can at any time, by reference to it, ascertain *how happy* they are, compared with the people of my State, with as much precision as they can ascertain the day of the month by referring to the counting-house calendar, or how cold it is by looking at the thermometer. I give the proportion of the whole white population who, being over twenty years old, *cannot read or write*:

Buncombe county, N. C., 1-6; North Carolina, 1-8; Georgia, 1-13; Virginia, 1-13; South Carolina, 1-13; Alabama, 1-14; Mississippi, 1-15; Ohio, 1-42.

It will be observed that North Carolina stands highest in the scale of human happiness, civilization, and refinement, and that the good people of Buncombe are particularly blest! [Laughter.] If their distinguished Representative here is not satisfied with this exhibition of his constituents, in future he may remember the old adage, that "those who live in glass houses should not throw stones!" [Laughter.]

Mr. ASHE. Will the gentleman favor us with a comparison of the statistics of crime?

Mr. CAMPBELL. My time is so nearly out, that I cannot. If it will comfort the gentleman in his present tribulation, I will admit that Northern penitentiaries show more convicts than Southern ones. The reason is obvious to everybody, everywhere. *We punish our rascals, you allow yours*

to run at large! [Laughter.] At least we have seen some recent evidence of this fact.

Something about crime was said by the honorable member from South Carolina [Mr. BUAT] the other day, in explanation, after the member from Massachusetts [Mr. MANN] had closed. His purpose seemed to be to relieve Southern people from the inference of cupidity, raised by the assertion that they would not hang a slave for a crime for which a white man was punished with death. He stated that so far was the assertion from truth, the fact was that a slave was hung for sundry offences, which, if perpetrated by a white man, were not so punished. Now, I have been told, that in many slave States, where the slave is so punished, the law provides that the master shall be *paid* for him at public expense. I do not know that this is true.

[Several voices—"It is true."]

Then the South is not relieved from the implication of mercenary motives by the facts.

Sir, when that honorable gentleman or any other Southern gentleman speaks to this question, I wish to direct his particular attention to this point. Upon what principle of moral right, or of justice, do you make this discrimination? You denounce us, if *we* propose to enlighten the slave, as "aggressors"—you refuse to teach him yourselves—to fix upon his mind the impress of morality, and his duties to his fellow man—you doom him to degradation, and ignorance of the *right*, and yet *hang* him for the *wrong*; whilst the master, who *knows* and is *taught* what are his duties, is permitted to go unwhipped of justice.

Mr. Chairman, gentlemen from the South insist upon calculating the value of this Union. We of the North will not. I regard it as more profitable to calculate the value of the Proviso against extending slavery. Gentlemen talk about their Southern Convention, and about dissolving the Union. I have already shown that this is the old scheme of a few bewildered men, who perhaps are led on, as Mr. BENTON informs us, by an unhal- lowed ambition! It is a matter of deep regret to me that some of those with whom I deeply sympathized in former struggles, whose noble efforts in the cause of their country have commanded our admiration, are now disposed to unite with them in the "dream of a separate independence—a dream to be interrupted by bloody conflicts with their neighbors, and a vile dependence on a foreign Power"—to join them in renouncing the glorious flag of our country—in destroying the peace of mankind, and deluging our fertile fields in blood. As to a dissolution of the Union, it cannot occur. We will not contemplate it. Coolly and firmly determined to carry out the great principles of our fathers—unawed by the storm which may threaten—we will follow the advice of the great and good Washington, "discountenancing whatever may suggest even a suspicion that it can in any event be abandoned, and indignantly frowning upon the first dawning of every attempt to alienate any portion of our country from the rest, or to enfeeble the sacred ties which now link together the various parts." Sir, the *attempt* may be made, but the whole North, with thousands in the South, will resist it to the last.

The gentleman from North Carolina, [Mr. CLINGMAN,] with a coolness by no means credita-

ble to his patriotism, calculates it as a matter of *dollars and cents*! You do not find the Yankee making such calculations; and why? Because it won't pay—it won't pay even the expense of slate pencil. He has run the matter over in his head, and considers it a scheme which it is impossible to carry out. He knows it cannot be accomplished, and he would as soon think of calculating the costs of a railroad to the moon! But the honorable gentleman has, no doubt, worn out many slate pencils in the cause, and has given us the benefit of his figures! I have no time to expose the fallacy of his conclusions, if it were necessary.

A few words as to his proposed "northern boundary" of the contemplated "Southern Confederacy." He bids high for "Old Kentuck," and makes the Ohio river the dividing line. The gentleman forgot, (if he ever knew) that there are strong natural ties which unite Ohio and Kentucky. Their citizens never can, *they never will, become foreigners to each other!* The hardy sons of Ohio have united their destinies for life with Kentucky's fair daughters. We are one people, and I think I may safely say that when struggle comes, if come it must, Ohio and Kentucky will be found as they were in the last war with Great Britain in defence of our frontiers, shoulder to shoulder under the flag of the Union, bearing as their motto, "*One country—one institution—one destiny!*"

The gentleman bids for Kentucky to join in this unallowed plot. What is his bid? Kentucky, being a stock-raising State, is to have a monopoly of the Southern market! The old Northwest—Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Michigan, &c.—are to be shut out from the immense benefits of the Southern market! I do not suppose the gentleman regards Kentuckians as fools, because they have not made many speeches here; but he underrates their business faculties very much if he thinks they would be willing to exchange the few England market for their products for that of Charleston. They know that the rule would work both ways. And when the Northwest is driven from the South with her pork, her beef, and her flour, I suggest for the consideration of members from Louisiana, that there might be a falling off in the exports from New Orleans which are now paraded to show the vast resources of the South!

I should like to be present, Mr. Chairman, [Mr. LINN BOYD being in the chair.] in your District, when the brave sons of the "dark and bloody ground" should be assembled to hear the first disunion speech. What would be their feelings on hearing as an argument for disunion, that by shutting out from Mobile the pork raised by their brothers or their sons in Ohio and Indiana, the value of Kentucky pigs would be increased ten cents a head? What would your people do with such an orator? They would snake-poll him out of the District, and set the dogs on him!

The gentleman wants Maryland, too. If he can get Maryland, he will make Baltimore the New York of the South. Well, sir, if Maryland thinks it best to take this sort of "street paper" without any endorsement or mortgage security, she had better suspend her Baltimore and Ohio railroad; we of the great Northwest would be compelled to take the *Pittsburg route!*

Mr. Chairman, I will not pursue the absurdities of the arguments which have been offered in favor of disunion. Whenever the proper time comes, whenever there are any "*overt acts*," arguments more potent than mine will be furnished by the "Commander-in-Chief" at the other end of the Avenue. "Old Whitey" nips the grass on the public grounds, and will be in good plight.

I have shown some of the reasons why I am in favor of the Proviso of the Ordinance of 1787, designed going at large into an exhibition of its practical effects. For want of time, I will relate an anecdote which is calculated to impress them upon the mind.

I have a constituent who has been an eye-witness to the rapid progress of that Territory, which our revolutionary fathers first applied to. He is a native of the "Old Dominion," and at the age of sixteen fought in the battles of Eutaw and Guilford Court-House. The Northwest Territory was then a vast, unbroken wilderness, uninhabited save by the savage and the wild beast. No keel had ruffled the smooth surface of her magnificent lakes and rivers. Her boundless forests were untouched by the woodman! The sod of her vast prairies was unbroken by the agriculturist! In 1787 it was decreed that this soil should never be polluted by the foot of slavery! In '89 he left his friends, and with his rifle upon his shoulder, cast his destiny there. In that year he taught, in a log cabin on the banks of the beautiful Ohio, the second school of the Northwestern Territory. Subsequently he aided to "carry up the corner" of the first log cabin, where now stands the great city of Cincinnati! In 1802 he was a member of the Convention which framed the Constitution of Ohio, and aided in embodying in it the clause prohibiting slavery. Sir, that man still lives to witness its fruits. Four millions of freemen are happy there, with no fears of insurrections to trouble them in the stillness of the night—the lamentations of no slaves to disturb their repose. Instead of the single hut surrounded by savages, thousands of colleges, academies, churches, and school-houses, adorn the land, and tens of thousands of merry children acquire in them those impressions which will make them useful to their country and prepare their souls for eternity. Sir, I relate this anecdote to challenge gentlemen to point me in the history of all the world to any country, in any age, where, in the lifetime of one man, such progress has been made, and for the purpose of pointing to these monuments there erected to the patriotism, wisdom, and sagacity of those who formed the old Continental Congress of 1774! That individual, although aged, still lives, and is still physically able to protect the family of a native of that soil who is absent from his home to urge, as a solemn duty, the passage of the same provision for the Territories which our posterity must occupy.

Before high Heaven, let me say, *that duty*, regardless of consequences, will be discharged. That person will urge upon all to keep up the lights of liberty enkindled by our fathers; that we may be directed by them in the advancement of measures which will secure the highest degree of perfection of which man in his fallen condition is susceptible in this life; and when "*its fitful dream is over*," a place in that land where sorrows and oppressions never come.